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Giancana associate testifies on Mafia-CIA plot on Castro

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Washington—John Roselli, an associate of Sam Giancana, reputed mobster slain in Chicago last week, yesterday gave the Senate Intelligence Committee confirmation of reports linking the Mafia to an alleged 1960 Central Intelligence Agency plot to assassinate Cuban Premier Fidel Castro.

Mr. Roselli testified under heavy security. At his request, the publicity-shy witness was smuggled in a rear entrance, and was guarded by both Capitol Hill police and United States marshals and flanked by two lawyers.

However, the 70-year-old Mr. Roselli, said to be a former member of the Al Capone gang and now facing possible deportation, apparently co-operated with the intelligence panel whose members questioned him for more than two hours.

Senator Frank Church (D., Idaho), chairman of the committee, later told newsmen that Mr. Roselli had "supplemented" existing reports of the Mafia role in the alleged CIA plot to kill Mr. Castro. Senator Church, while refusing to disclose details of Mr. Roselli's testimony, emphasized that the witness had "not departed in any way" from reports already published

about the Castro assassination scheme.

According to the senator, "Mr. Roselli filled out the chronology and gave us a great deal of detail." The witness said the chairman, had given the committee "much greater understanding" of the relationship existing between the CIA and the underworld.

The Roselli testimony, Senator Church stressed, did not involve identification of any government figures other than those in the CIA, with whom the witness had had dealings.

The senator confirmed that the subject of the late Mr. Giancana was raised during the Roselli testimony, but said that was "not an important part."

The Senate committee was seeking to contact Mr. Giancana shortly before he was killed in what appeared to be a gangland slaying at his home late last week. Since then, Senator Church has stated that protection will be made available, if desired, for witnesses appearing before the intelligence panel.

Mr. Church noted that the committee had not sought the names of other Mafia figures involved with the CIA, on the basis of an understanding with Mr. Roselli.

"He was concerned that to name people other than government people would endanger their lives," the chairman explained.

The witness had expressed concern about his congressional testimony after the murder of Mr. Giancana and, according to Senator Church, the security precautions stemmed from Mr. Roselli's anxiety about his own safety.

Still to be questioned is Robert E. Mahon, the alleged liaison man between Mr. Giancana, Mr. Roselli and the CIA. Mr. Mahon, a former aide to Howard Hughes, the billionaire, invoked Fifth Amendment protection when he last appeared before the Senate committee, but he is expected to be granted limited immunity from prosecution in return for future cooperation.

Senator Church also reported that a White House meeting was scheduled yesterday between committee aides and presidential staff in an effort to resolve problems over intelligence material not yet turned over to the congressional investigators.

The meeting was arranged after Mr. Church complained that White House failure to provide National Security Council minutes and information on CIA covert activities had delayed committee work to the point that interrogation of former Kennedy and Johnson administration officials had to be postponed.

White House spokesmen insisted that there had been no intention on the part of presidential staff to impede the work of the Senate committee.